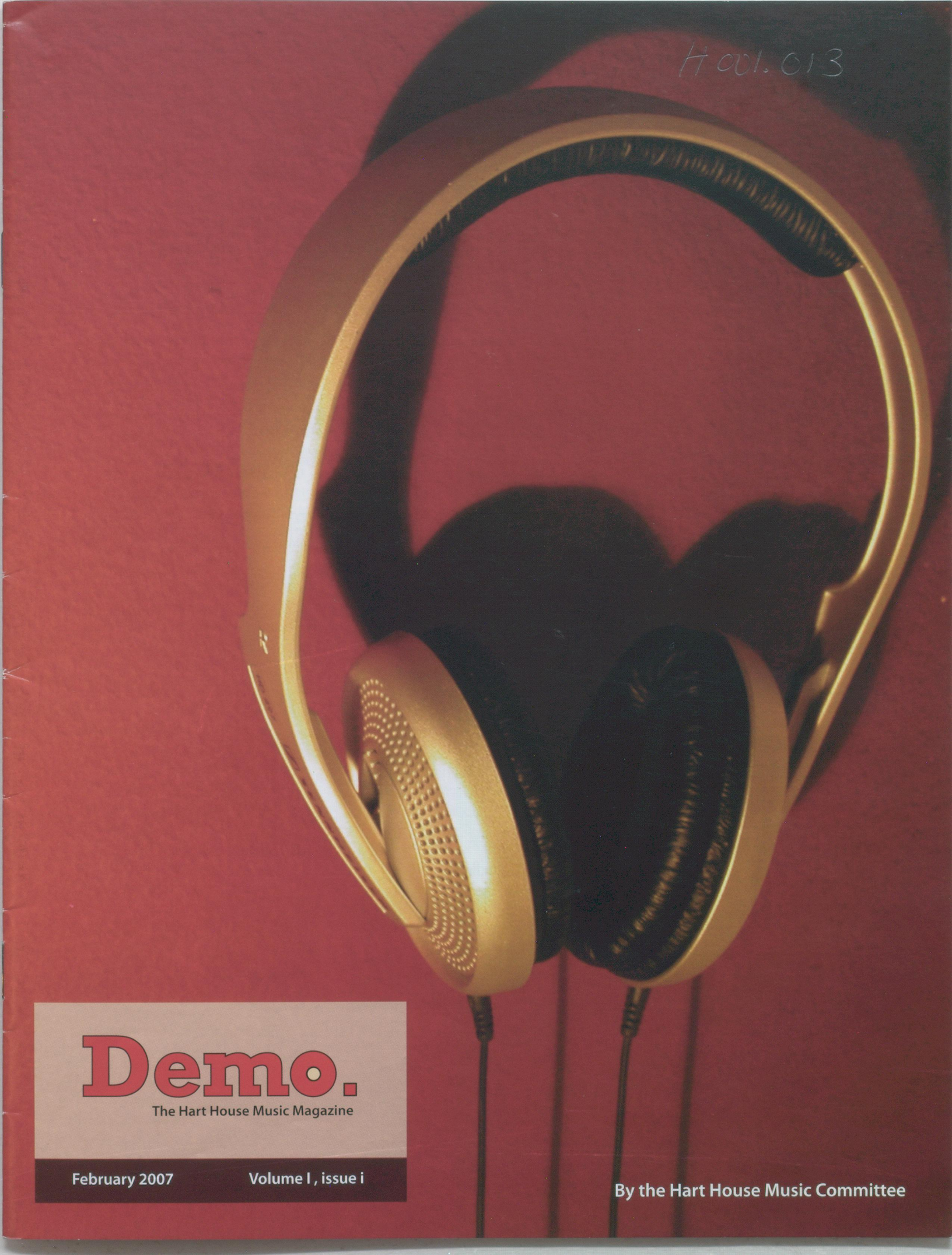
H 001.013

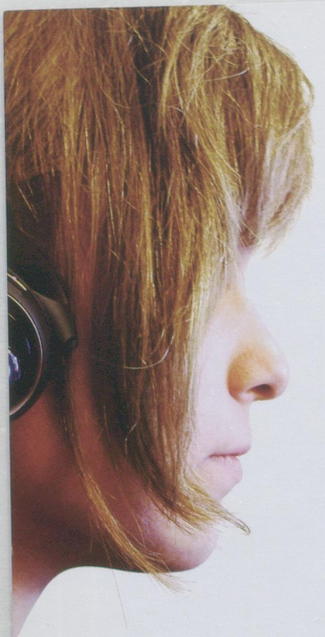


Demo.

The Hart House Music Magazine

February 2007 Volume I , issue i

By the Hart House Music Committee



Demo.

feb 2007 | issue one

what's inside...

FEATURES

06 **Radio Programming That Differs**
Live music, local programming and Med School DJs. Erin-James Abra reveals why CIUT 89.5 FM, UT's radio station, is well worth a listen.

10 **Conversation with a Modern Maestro**
No more geeky associations with band practice. The newest addition to Hart House's roster of conductors, Roger Mantie brings the "cool" back in an interview with Cleo Brown.

13 **Hot Jazz for Cold February Nights**
Talia Zajac pinpoints five of the best Toronto jazz hotspots to warm your winter nights.

09 **Secret to the Indie Boom**
From the garage to TV sets around the world, Erica Cupido talks about how the infamous "O.C. Effect" is bringing indie music to the mainstream.

OPINION

12 **Manufactured Controversy**
Jelani Lowe explores the roles of artist and critic in the heated struggle between k-os and NOW Magazine.

DEPARTMENT

03 **Editorial**

04 **Upcoming Events**

04 **Delectable Divas**
Zoe Dille reflects on how music as a universal language has helped pave the way for changes to women's status in society.

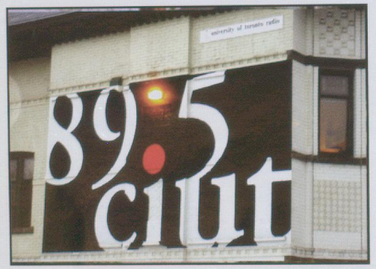
05 **What's that Noise?**
Hart House's hidden gem, the Record Room, is getting a new revitalized home. Curator Valentine Gurfinkel spills the secrets of its 3000 vinyl collection.

05 **Student Composers Concert**
Maria Kaushansky previews Hart House's annual Student Composers Concert in March. Hidden talents, let your notes be heard!

14 **Reviews**
Matt Krzyzynski reviews The Slip's latest rise-to-mainstream album, Eisenhower, and their recent El Mocambo concert.

Also, read Jessica Mifsud's verdict on Daniel Victor's new artists collaboration concept, Neverending White Lights, as it comes to the Drake.

Illustration: Natalie Draz / Cleo Brown. *Page 10*



Page 06

Page 05

Editorial

New Sounds for a New Year

In the never-ending bustle of Toronto's city life, one can't help but notice just how many people, young and old, are inconspicuously bobbing their heads, mumbling words in odd pitches, or trying so very hard not to break into dance.

They are not crazy after all.

Look closely and you can be sure to find two dangling headphone wires. And it is through these that the vibrant life-source called, music, makes its everyday impact.

Demo is an extension of this passion for music. As a Hart House publication, we seek to feature musical indulgences both on and off campus. Music has the ability to take us away from a mundane reality to our own little world. It is Demo's goal to draw together these individual delights and bring them to you, all in one source. More importantly, we want to draw out the student artists among us, so expect to see features, opinions and reviews by and about the people you know.

There is a soundtrack to life, whether inadvertent or blatant. A single song can bring back memories of that one day – one specific time at one specific place.

The question is, what are you listening to?

The Demo Magazine Team

Demo.
Music News: On and Off Campus

feb 2007 | issue one

Editor-in-Chief	Macy Siu
Managing Editor	Norman Goh
Deputy Editors	Stephanie Gouinlock
	Lavenya Rajendra
	Christine Pinto
Contributors	Erin-James Abra
	Cleo Brown
	Erica Cupido
	Zoe Dille
	Valentine Gurfinkel
	Maria Kaushansky
	Matt Krzyzynski
	Jelani Lowe
	Jessica Mifsud
	Talia Zajac
Advisor	Zoe Dille
Published by	Hart House
	7 Hart House Circle
	Toronto, ON, M5S3H3
	▯ 416 946 7325
	▯ 416 978 8387
Cover Design	Norman Goh
	Image from SXC.hu
Colophone	Demo is the Hart House music magazine, a division of the Hart House Music Committee.

All Contents © 2007. Demo Magazine. All rights reserved. Any use of the contents of this publication without the express written permission of the publisher is strictly prohibited. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Some of the views expressed by contributors may not be the representative views of the publisher.

MACY SIU

A second year English and Fine Art Major, Macy lives in the songs of a neverending mix tape. When she's not playing the piano or flute, she spends her spare time eavesdropping in coffee shops.

NORMAN GOH

As a fourth year Engineering Science student, Norman Goh needs a strong repertoire for his late nights. Gregorian chants at midnight, Beatles at 1, and Broadways at 3. He prefers singing to sleeping.

Stephanie Gouinlock

This second year Evolutionary Biology major confesses to enjoying the top 40 charts. This way, she can explore new music from the comforts of her personal radio station.

Lavenya Rajendra

Lavenya Rajendra is a second year English major and has always been passionate about music in general. She listens to anything and everything that comes her way.

Christine Pinto

Christine Pinto is in third year doing a specialist in Human Biology. She starts her days with classical music and seals the deal with the urban stuff.

Meet the Editors

DELECTABLE divas

reflections on international women's day

Hart House, University of Toronto, presents its fifth year honouring International Women's day with the exciting installation of Delectable Divas V. This event has become a benchmark evening in the Hart House programming schedule. Since its inception, it has garnered support and praise from performers and patrons alike. It features fabulous entertainment by a roster of this city's most talented female entertainers and a mouth-watering array of free delicious desserts. From chocolate fondue to petit fours, there is something for every sweet tooth. This sweet and savoury event is a platform for the best in female artistic expression. Recognized throughout the world, International Women's Day acknowledges women's struggles, achievements and advancements. Hart House is proud to carry on this tradition within the learning environment as the University helps to guide the next batch of female world citizens towards a world of possibilities.

International Women's Day (March 8th, 2007) is an occasion marked by women's groups around the world. This date is also commemorated by the United Nations and is designated in many countries as a national holiday. When women on all continents, often divided by national boundaries and by ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic and political differences, come together to celebrate their Day, they can look back to a tradition that represents at least nine decades of struggle for equality, justice, peace and development (courtesy United Nations website). This year's Delectable Divas will turn the clocks back to focus on the context under which International Woman's Day was developed, and examine the suffrage movement. By linking social and political movements with the changes in the status of women, the event will weave together a narrative that is both entertaining and informative. Music is a universal language and one that has punctuated major shifts in social changes, whether protest songs of the sixties, rebellious rhythms of reggae or the storytelling melodies of folk, music has been a constant in our world's history. Delectable Divas V will showcase the era from Burlesque to Motown as experienced through the eyes of a female narrator. Hart House also has a lot to celebrate as we bid farewell to the first female Warden of Hart House, Margaret Hancock. Margaret will be stepping down as Warden in the Spring after serving the House for 10 years, and breaking into the male dominated position as leader of the House. In fact, women were banned from Hart House until 1972. Hence, it is only fitting that we turn our collective lens to the early days of the women's movement and celebrate not only its global advances but the local ones much closer to home as well.

Join us on March 9th, 2007 for an inspirational evening to toast International Women's Day and fete the accomplishments of Margaret Hancock.

ZOE DILLE

Zoe Dille has been a Programme Advisor at Hart House (Music and Special Events) for the past 5 years. A University of Toronto graduate, she has been involved in cultural arts programming for over 12 years. Zoe is a jury member for the 2007 Juno Awards.

other Concerts

Soul Influence

Sunday February 25, 2007
3:00 PM - Great Hall

Black History Month special concert features Canadian acapella septet *Soul Influence*. African in its use of rhythm and beat, Afro-jazz in musical style, Christian in its conviction and lyrics, you will enjoy the power and simplicity of rich harmonies and beautiful voices blended together seamlessly in spirit and song.

student composers CONCERT

MARIA KAUSHANSKY

Maria Kaushansky is currently in her third year, studying at the Faculty of Music at U of T. She is a member of the Hart House Music Committee.

Have you ever looked around your lecture hall and wondered if the person sitting beside you has a hidden musical talent? Probably not.

As students, we are so busy with tests, essays and presentations that it is often hard to believe some of us still have time to do other things. And yet, very often, after hours of labs, readings, papers, and last minute cramming, there are students who actually create music. Whether it is their aspiring career path, hobby, or a form of therapy, there are many composers at U of T. If you don't personally know any, you should come out to the Hart House Student Composers Concert on March 30th, 2007. This annual event, now in its third year, brings together student composers from all faculties across U of T for an exciting program of new music.

Those of us who compose music know how difficult it is to find a suitable venue and performers, especially if you do not major in music. Tired of hearing your pieces performed as Midi files in Finale or Sibelius? Hart House's Student Composers Concert is the perfect opportunity for you.

This event allows aspiring composers from U of T to have their compositions performed by professional musicians. All students at U of T who author music are encouraged to submit their works. The genres of music that will be accepted are jazz, contemporary, classical and Latin. In the past we have had everything including piano solos, string quartets, vocalists, and computer generated music. Attendance in past concerts has been impressive and we expect more people to come out for this year's event.

If you are interested in new and original composition, whether composing or appreciating, mark March 30th on your calendars. If you are planning to submit a piece, the deadline is Feb. 12th, 2007 at 11:55 pm.

For further inquiries, please contact harthousescc@gmail.com, or log on to www.harthousemusic.com and click on the "Student Composers Concert" link.

what's that...NOISE?

The Record Room just might be Hart House's greatest secret. A real shame, because it is overflowing with beautiful music. The Room has been a part of Hart House for nearly 50 years, and over the decades, it has gathered a collection worthy of its fine pedigree. Within its walls are over 3000 vinyls of all sizes, colors, styles, eras and moods. Traversing through its stacks, one can trace the musical history of our world. Experience the Baroque through Handel's complete works, relive the glorious Jazz Age of the 20's and 30's with Billie, Louis, and the Duke right beside you, or explore the mysteries of Tibet guided by the chants of Buddhist Monks. The journey is endless.

But the Record Room is not only a reservoir of the past, it is wholeheartedly committed to collecting new and local music, especially those that may not be commercially viable, but are culturally vital. Through the generosity of donors, the Record Room has built up a sizeable collection of contemporary music over the past two years. Everything from local stars like Ninja High School, to American underground sensations such as The Magik Markers and Wolf Eyes, and even the world legendary Steve Reich, are now represented. One item that deserves particular mention is a recent donation of nearly the entire Music Gallery Editions (MGE) catalogue. Released from the late 70's to mid 80's, the MGE were produced by Toronto's famous Music Gallery, an organization which to this day is committed to presenting and promoting experimental music. They are the sonic kaleidoscope of the Alternative. It is within this collection that one can hear an orchestra play exclusively with glass instruments, or Whales singing underwater. Another recent addition is the world music submissions for this year's Juno Awards.

Like music itself, the Record Room is always moving forward. As I write this, the Room is in its final stages of a grand revitalization. This year, it will have a new cozy home on the 3rd floor (no more having to turn down the music because there is a mourning across the hall – this is not an exaggeration, it really did happen), with a brand new audio system, new turntable, new seats, new shelves, new carpet (no more duct-tape patches over holes), new artwork, and… well you'll have to come by and check it out for yourself.

VALENTINE GURFINKEL

Valentine is the current Curator of the Hart House Record Room.

Radio that Matters

By Erin James-Abra

CIUT 89.5FM
www.ciut.fm

"As a non-profit alternative to mainstream media, we provide community access to the airwaves, and offer programming that reflects the diverse elements of the communities we serve."

Indeed, Stowar asks the question, "Where else can you find second year med students doing a radio show?"

It is hard to think of an answer.

Everyone has experienced car rides

where the designated "DJ" tunes into radio station after radio station, dissatisfied with all that is being played. There is uproar in the backseat when the strains of Nickelback are heard yet again. All groan at the promise of "Today's hits and yesterday's classics!", and later cringe at the frequency of commercial breaks. In short, radio can be frustrating.

Yet, it doesn't need to be. CIUT 89.5 FM — the University of Toronto's radio station — proves that radio playlists can contain more than club favourites and the Celine Dion song that has been on rotation since the mid-nineties. Ken Stowar, the Program Director, explains that CIUT "looks for the voids and the needs" in mainstream radio, then tries to fill these gaps with alternative programming. This sentiment is expressed in the station's mission statement:

The program Stowar speaks of is called *The Mainline*, a spoken-word show airing on Mondays between 3 and 4 in the afternoon, discussing today's health issues. Programs, such as *The Mainline*, reflect CIUT's strong connection to the U of T community. The acquisition of an FM license in 1987 means that CIUT can be heard from "Barrie to Buffalo, Kitchener to Cobourg", yet local programming is still a large priority. Stowar emphasizes that CIUT "wants to promote what's going on here." As proof of the station's success in this mission, the Faculty of Music, Medicine, the Munk Centre, and Hart House all have their own shows. Furthermore, 35 percent of CIUT volunteers are U of T students.

One of these students is Michelle Johnson, host of *Blissful Thunder*, which can be heard on Thursday afternoons from 1 to 2 pm. In describing the music played on her show, Johnson says simply, "I go everywhere."

Photograph: Macy Siu

She plays a collection of indie music, top 40, and hip hop – a mix that Johnson believes can bring "independent bands onto the same plateau as more mainstream bands." Johnson also conducts interviews with the musicians, and listeners are often treated to live performances. Past guests on Blissful Thunder include In-Flight Safety, These Electric Lives, The Speakeasies and The Flints. Johnson recently came across an article in the Metro highlighting the success of In-Flight Safety. Of the article, Johnson says with excitement, "it's nice to see a band I've had on the show become so successful!"

Live music can also be found elsewhere in CIUT's programming. In promoting a new show called *Take 5*, Stowar states that "Every single day we ensure there is live music." *Take 5*'s guest bands seem equally dedicated to this mission. Stowar tells the story of The Duhks, who recently performed on the show. After finishing their set at 2 am in the Horseshoe Tavern, the band slept on the floor of CIUT's

Student DJ and host of *Blissful Thunder*, Michelle Johnson.
Photograph: Erin James-Abra

St. George Street studio, getting up to play three songs at 7 am.

This story demonstrates the contagious dedication of CIUT volunteers. The station's goal to "stimulate, educate, entertain and challenge" audiences could not be realized without the passion and enthusiasm of community members. Stowar notes that CIUT is "expected to offer programming that differs" and one glance at the station's schedule proves that this expectation is met.

For information on community and student affairs, music that may not get air time elsewhere on the dial, or simply for a break from the boisterous ads of mainstream radio, CIUT 89.5 FM is worth a listen.

For program listings, please visit the CIUT website, http://www.ciut.fm/schedule.php

ERIN JAMES-ABRA

After growing up in small town Ontario, Erin has spent the last four years developing her street cred in big city Toronto. Word up.

"I just made a mix CD of music that I felt was scoring my late twenties,"[1] recalls Zach Braff regarding his 2003 film soundtrack for *Garden State*. The disc was a cool companion to the film, but more importantly, it was a mainstream platform for a variety of independent artists. Indie music is constantly being featured on today's most popular soundtracks – most notably in compilations from popular T.V. shows such as *One Tree Hill* and *The O.C.*

Offbeat artists are featured on soundtracks for both economic and artistic reasons. Lesser known bands are often looking for exposure and prove to be cheaper than mainstream artists. In turn, featured songs are easily re-appropriated with a show's plot or characters. Instead of giving priority to the band's intended theme or context for a song, Alexandra Patsavas, music producer for *The O.C.*, compiles soundtracks by considering songs she thinks specific characters would listen to.[2] By relinquishing creative control to producers, songs become associated with celebrity personalities instead of the artists themselves.

It is no wonder that instant exposure through television shows is often criticized as being a "sell-out". However, these artists are aware that gaining listeners is not always equivalent to gaining fans. The Walkmen's Hamilton Leithauser views his band's performance at *The O.C.*'s fictional rock club, the Bait Shop, with an open mind: "I think people will buy the record, [but] I don't think you can really gain actual fans […] through such a mass market thing."[3]

To avoid this controversial dilemma, covers have become an integral part of popular soundtracks. This is because they can convey the music supervisor's vision without being dated or ingrained to yet another primetime Hollywood moment. Examples include Iron and Wine's interpretation of Postal Service's "Such Great Heights" on the *Garden State* soundtrack, and the latest *O.C.* mix, Covering Our Tracks – a compilation of memorable songs recorded by other indie bands. In turn, consumers can relate to the music, while being introduced to the sounds of new artists.

This growth of independent artists, infamously deemed as "The O.C. Effect", tends to occur in three distinct steps. First, producers give public praise to up-and-coming artists by featuring their singles on the show's soundtracks. Subsequently, fictional characters begin to casually mention that they are fans, which per chance may lead to a coveted live performance within the storyline. Finally, those in the audience gain enough interest to purchase the artists' albums, influencing the transition from independent artist to commercial success.

After providing music for the final moments of *The O.C.*'s season two finale, Imogen Heap's "Hide and Seek" rose from no. 98 to 32 on the Official Billboard Hot 100 Download Chart.[4] Similarly, The Shins' exposure on the *Garden State* soundtrack tripled the sales of their recent album, Oh, Inverted World. "The O.C. Effect" has been a stepping stone for bands such as Rooney, Modest Mouse and Death Cab for Cutie.[5]

The success of a compilation relies on the fact that soundtracks are marketed toward two different groups, those who picture their favourite moment on television, and those who hear their favourite song.

ERICA CUPIDO

Erica Cupido is a second year English Major at the University of Toronto who also studies Italian and sociology. She has previously written articles for both The Mike and The Varsity. Her current playlist includes Gwen Stefani and The Radio Dept.

[1] About: Hollywood Movies. (Sept. 1, 2004) *Garden State Soundtrack News*. Retrieved Dec. 23, 2006, from http://movies.about.com/od/gardenstate/a/garden090204.htm
[2] IGN Entertainment (Fox Interactive Media Inc.) (Mar 22, 2005) *Music of The O.C.: Interview With Music Supervisor Alexandra Patsavas*. Retrieved Dec 22, 2006, from http://music.ign.com/articles/598/598134p1.html
[3] AlterNet (January 25, 2005) *The O.C. Effect*. Retrieved Dec 22, 2006, from http://www.alternet.org/mediaculture/21076/
[4] Imogen Heap MySpace Profile (June 2005) *Biography*. Retrieved Dec 20, 2006. from http://www.myspace.com/imogenheap
[5] AlterNet.

in conversation with a modern maestro

In the limbo between end of classes and the start of exams, I sat down on a Hart House couch with the new conductor of the Hart House Symphonic Band (HHSB), Roger Mantie.

Before starting the '06-'07 season with the HHSB, Mantie spent the last 14 years teaching music. He is currently completing a PhD at U of T's Faculty of Music. HHSB is Mantie's way of recapturing his passion for teaching. As he puts it, his doctorate work involves reading and writing about music, "but no 'doing' of music".

Mantie is a saxophone player by fate – choosing the instrument after all coveted trumpet positions were claimed in his elementary school band. Since then, he has avidly performed in a number of music scenes, including gigs with orchestras and jazz ensembles as well as more "contemporary leanings" such as Country, Western, Pop and R&B. He has also done his time in the Ottawa Band of the Ceremonial Guard. It is a formal marching band that requires members to endure boot camp and live in barracks.

Mantie thinks that anyone can be involved in music. HHSB is the working example of these "deeply held philosophical beliefs [he has] about music and music teaching". He is delighted that there is massive participation from all parts of the school. While the majority of the musicians are full-time undergrads from the sciences and humanities, there are a few alumni and graduate students. He even reveals that there are some "very, very talented people within the engineering faculty". No matter their backgrounds, all members sacrifice hours of their time every week to play with the band.

Roger Mantie may be the most humble person ever to admit that he is a conductor. He has a sincere zeal for music in all its forms. He admires the fervor of "garage-type bands" and "thinks they need to keep going". He refers to the HHSB as a "collective musical experience" – every musician contributes equally to the performance. His conducting in performances is "just putting a show on for the audience" because he does not want to "take the responsibility away from the musicians". This represents a dramatic break from the dominant school of thought about conducting, which maintains that conductors are the closest living beings to God. Mantie openly calls himself the "anti-conductor" as his love for large ensembles is founded on what he aptly calls its "humanness", referring to the benefits of communality in the performance and learning experience.

Symphonic band music has never reached dizzying heights of popular attention. The typical person who sustains the daily deluge of pop music has a hard time processing the vast amount of timbre that a 70-plus piece band can produce. I enquired about this apparent demise of new forms of classical music. "There are elements of its death", Mantie allowed, but followed up with two striking examples of the contrary. For an upcoming concert, the HHSB will play a commissioned composition by Ben Bolden, a current PhD student at U of T. There is also the exciting promise of a new piece written by band member, Ryan Janssen, who was involved with the creation of the infamous Hydrolophone (water organ), a new instrument that premiered in the contemporary art showcase, Nuit Blanche.

Watch out for Roger Mantie at the helm of HHSB's next concert – except not really. After all, it is all about the musicians.

CLEO BROWN

Cleo was born in a guitar case somewhere outside Reno in the mid-80s and continues to live in the same spirit into which she was delivered.

[A look at k-os vs NOW Magazine]

MANUFACTURED CONTROVERSY

Nobody likes a critic.

After his recent clash with NOW magazine contributor, Jason Richards, it's safe to assume that rule goes double for k-os.

The Juno Award-winning hip-hop artist blasted Richards last October for an unenthusiastic review of his recent release, Atlantis: Hymns 4 the Disco, in which he was labelled a "crossover pop artist disguised as a true school b-boy". In a racially charged response posted on his MySpace page, k-os slammed Richards as a "sell-out" and an "Uncle Tom."

According to NOW Magazine, k-os was a
"crossover pop artist disguised as a true school b-boy"

The drama continued as both men went on to trade accusations and insults from their preferred pulpits – Richards in the pages of NOW magazine and k-os onstage. During a performance at Mod Club, he shouted, "F**k NOW magazine," much to the audience's delight.

Meanwhile, those of us sitting on the sidelines could only scratch our heads in amazement. For musicians and critics to be at odds is nothing new, but the level of these personal attacks is striking.

It's unfortunate because behind his rhetoric k-os does have a valid point. The review in question seems more concerned with the artist than the art. It gives readers little sense of what k-os may have been trying to say with the album or even how successful he was in the attempt.

JELANI LOWE

Jelani Lowe recently returned to U of T to complete a BA in English. He also works as writer/editor for a small medical journal in Toronto.

Look at it this way: imagine that you have lived and breathed a project 24-7 for 8-12 months. Everything you have has been poured into its creation. Now imagine some guy coming along and deconstructing your work with a few clever wisecracks, all in 200 words or less.

Hardly seems fair, does it?

When a musician invests so much of themselves into their work, any criticism might easily be misconstrued as a personal attack, even if that is not the original intent. But that does not excuse k-os for his behaviour.

K-os effectively undermined his own argument with an over-the-top approach that makes Kanye West's ego seem small by comparison. No doubt, his poor choice of words turned off many people who might otherwise have supported his protest. It is no coincidence then that his tirade was eventually pulled from the internet. My guess is that his words were written in the heat of moment. Hindsight is always 20/20 they say.

As long as we have that, there will likely be critics. That's not necessarily a bad thing. Even critics have their role to play.

At its best, music criticism can provide listeners with context to better appreciate the music. Its purpose should not be to denigrate but to educate and challenge the audience and artist, respectively.

This ongoing war between musicians and critics always seems to overlook the most important voice in the matter. The final word, for better or for worse, rests with you, the audience. With the simple act of purchasing an album or leaving it on the shelf, you can silence the most vocal critics or humble overgrown egos.

Use it wisely.

Hot Jazz for Cold February Nights
THE CHRONICLING OF A JAZZ BAR-CRAWL-A-THON

On a damp, dark Toronto evening, the cold February wind rises from Lake Ontario, sending a chill that seems to seep into the marrow of your bones. Crossing Queen's Park for the five hundredth time, you feel as if your soul is being drained.

The solution? Driving piano riffs, jingling snare beats, soaring sax solos, and the steady rhythm of a double bass – there is no better way to recharge than with some hot jazz music.

Here are a few hotspots where you can enjoy a drink (or two) and warm up to the sizzling music:

The Rex Jazz & Blues Bar

Where? 194 Queen St. West – you can't miss those bold electric blue letters that spell out the establishment's name.

What? At first glance, the "Rex" looks like an old-fashioned family restaurant with booths, high stools, dark wood walls and Tiffany lamps. A low, seemingly unnoticeable stage sits in the corner. However, once the lights are dimmed and the music starts, the whole place assumes the atmosphere of a relaxed, cozy bar. The menu has standard diner fare and snack foods, though the humus may get a bit runny.

In any case, sip on a glass of red wine and enjoy a regular performance by the house band. The Snap-your-finger rhythm of double bass, drums, piano and bass guitar is usually followed by an open mic night. You will no doubt hear some impressive improv sessions within the mixed talents.

Lula Lounge

Where? 1585 Dundas St. West: two blocks west of Dufferin.

What? Lula focuses on Cuban, Brazilian and other South American jazz. It also offers salsa and other dance lessons. Dinner is on the pricey side, so if you are on a tight budget, you might want to just come in for the Latin world drinks. Most wines are from Chile, Portugal or Spain and cocktails include mojitos, margaritas, and Havana Rum.

Jazz at the Old Mill

Where? 21 Old Mill Road. Just get off at the Old Mill subway station and turn right.

What? Friday nights only, the Smith Bar plays big band sound at the Old Mill hotel. The Old Mill serves as a wedding boutique hotel and spa, but also offers a Sunday brunch, so expect an older crowd ranging from newlyweds in their 30s to your grandma's neighbours. There is also a ten-dollar cover.

The older crowd means jazz at the Old Mill doesn't fit every student's taste, but if you want a completely different atmosphere from the grunge of downtown Toronto, then you might enjoy fleeing for an evening to this hotel. Located in the midst of Parkland on the banks of the Humber River, Tudor façade and dark interiors makes it look exactly like an inn from a Dickens novel.

Jazz at Oscar's

Where? Hart House's Arbor Room. If you don't know where Hart House is, you haven't lived.

What? Sadly, when this reviewer wanted to investigate, the Arbor Room was closed for renovations. However, the Arbor Room usually features inexpensive drinks and munchies, and a wide variety of guest artists. Look for posters around Hart House or enquire at the porter's desk. Plus, Jazz at Oscar's is right in the middle of our very own U of T!

Other Places to Go

Jazz.FM 91 gives a weekly listing of jazz events in Toronto on air and on its website. Nevertheless, a frequently overlooked (and student budgeted) venue is Toronto's own Faculty of Music, which often features concerts by both student jazz musicians and seasoned performers.

Wherever you go, by the end of the evening, you just might begin to imagine yourself in New Orleans, far from the Toronto cold.

TALIA ZAJAC

Talia Zajac is currently doing an M. A. in Medieval Studies. She has published fiction in the Hart House Literary Review and in Misunderstandings Magazine.

Neverending White Lights

Dazzles the Drake

JESSICA MIFSUD

Jessica Mifsud is a second-year English major and rock-and-roll fan. She likes adjectives, nouns, and delightfully long walks on the beach.

This is a concert review of a Neverending White Lights' show at the Drake Hotel on the 22nd of December. This is not a review about Montreal artist, Patrick Watson, who opened. If it was, I would say that Patrick Watson put on quite a performance, possessed great vocal range and piano skills. And, based partly on the imaginary drum solo in his set, he seemed to be a pretty likeable guy.

If you were looking for someone new to rock your proverbial socks off, the Neverending White Lights (NWL) are still too melodic for you. This live show though, was for those who want to see their music performed in a new and creative way.

One such way was in the NWL's stage setup. The intimate venue of the Drake's Underground was decorated with elaborate electric candelabras and chandeliers, as fake white flowers littered the stage. It set a somber dressed-up mood that presumably matched the melancholic music.

Making further efforts to spice the show up, Daniel Victor, the band's head honcho/composer/director/on-tour singer had planned a revolving door of guest vocalists. Supergarage's Marco DeFelice and The Watchmen's Daniel Greaves appeared to perform the tracks they sang on NWL's recent album, Act I: Goodbye Friends of the Heavenly Bodies, as well as an additional song each written by their respective bands. Lexi Valentine, singer of Toronto-based band Magneta Lane, also appeared to duet her band's "Bridge to Terabithia", while Victor provided additional vocals and guitar accompaniment.

The show seemed to be longer than it actually was, and defied the audience's expectations. Backed by an enthusiastic five-piece band, Victor and co. progressed through the bulk of the group's album, although in a decidedly less melancholic fashion. In fact, considering the exaggerated guitars and percussion during the performance, it was relatively rocking.

Overall: 3.5 band buttons out of 5.

the SLIP

You have to admire a band like The Slip. Since its formation in 1996, the experimental Boston/Montreal-based trio has conceived a sound that consistently situates itself outside the trends of indie rock.

The band, which includes brothers Brad (vocals & guitar) and Andrew Barr, (drums) along with bassist Marc Friedman, has infused their rock-based sound with influences from jazz, funk, soul, and folk. Each genre was given varying levels of prominence in their eight albums. The latest studio release, Eisenhower, is easily their most structured and accessible record to date. Yet, it still maintains the first-rate musicianship and unpretentious ambition that have become the crux of the band's evolution.

Photograph: Matt Krzyzynski

While their albums have always generated critical acclaim, it is the drawing power of The Slip's thrilling live shows that has gained the most attention. As the trio begins to attain mainstream status, valid questions have been raised as to whether they would tone down the spontaneous, improvisational components of their music on tour.

If their December 9th show in Toronto was any indication, The Slip have stayed true to their roots by delivering a magnetic concert experience that seamlessly combined newer tracks with the same vitality and dynamism that have been mainstays for the past ten years. The band energized the intimate downstairs of El Mocambo with an epic collage of songs that could have easily filled any arena-sized venue. They breezed through the set with a sharp synchronicity that allowed the Barr brothers and Friedman to display their technical wizardry and deft abilities of composition. Highlights included reinvigorated performances of new tracks "Suffocation Keep" and "If One of Us Should Fall". Especially fitting was their cover of The Who's "Baba O'Riley", an ideal synthesis of diverse elements and arguably, one of the best songs ever written. They did the song justice, and then some, with a virtuosic rendition that caught the crowd completely off guard. This is a perfect example of the band's fearlessness and refusal to be pigeonholed into any genre.

The Slip shows no signs of slowing down in their never-ending mission of exploring all that music has to offer. Now, with their well-deserved venture into the mainstream, new listeners will hopefully come along for the ride.

MATT KRZYZYNSKI

Matt Krzyzynski is a fourth year student and a double major in Cinema Studies and English. He plans to pursue a career in film as part of the Buffalo-based company Five Cent Bet Productions.

After silence, that which comes nearest to expressing the inexpressible is music. Music that gentler on the spirit lies, Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes. **The pause is as important as the note.** The notes I handle no better than many pianists. But the pauses between the notes - ah, that is where the art resides! A jazz musician is a juggler who uses harmonies instead of oranges. Music, when soft voices die vibrates in the memory. **The joy of music should never be interrupted by a commercial.** When words leave off, music begins. Truly to sing, that is a different breath. Music is the art which is most nigh to tears and memory. Music expresses that which cannot be said and on which it is impossible to be silent. Music should strike fire from the heart of man, and bring tears from the eyes of woman. **Music is the shorthand of emotion.** You are the music while the music lasts. A painter paints pictures on canvas, but musicians paint their pictures on silence. Music washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life. All deep things are song. It seems somehow the very central essence of us. If the King loves music, it is well with the land. Without music life would be a mistake. If a composer could say what he had to say in words he would not bother trying to say it in music. Why waste money on psychotherapy when you can listen to the B Minor Mass? He who sings scares away his woes. Music was my refuge. I could crawl into the space between the notes and curl my back to loneliness. **Take a music bath once or twice a week for a few seasons.** You will find it is to the soul what a water bath is to the body. Were it not for music, we might in these days say, the Beautiful is dead. Music is what feelings sound like. Music is the poetry of the air. If I were to begin life again, I would devote it to music. There is nothing in the world so much like prayer as music is. Men profess to be lovers of music, but for the most part they give no evidence in their opinions and lives that they have heard it. Music is the mediator between the spiritual and the sensual life. My idea is that there is music in the air, music all around us; the world is full of it, and you simply take as much as you require. **If I ever die of a heart attack, I hope it will be from playing my stereo too loud.** Music is your own experience, your thoughts, your wisdom. Music cleanses the understanding; inspires it, and lifts it into a realm which it would not reach if it were left to itself. Music is the wine which inspires one to new generative processes, and I am Bacchus who presses out this glorious wine for mankind and makes them spiritually drunken. **Play the music, not the instrument.** Music is the wine that fills the cup of silence. An intellectual is someone who can listen to the William Tell Overture without thinking of the Lone Ranger. Music is the medicine of the mind. You are the music while the music lasts. Music is the universal language of mankind. Music rots when it gets too far from the dance. Poetry atrophies when it gets too far from music. He who hears music, feels his solitude peopled at once. **Most people use music as a couch; they want to be pillowed on it, relaxed and consoled for the stress of daily living.** Music has been my playmate, my lover, and my crying towel.

Have a comment about the issue? Demo welcomes letters from its readers. Please e-mail to: harthouse.demo@gmail.com.

Letters may be edited for length and clarity. They may be published or used in any medium.

Demo Magazine
7 Hart House Circle
Toronto, ON, M5S3H3
416 946 7325
416 978 8387
Demo is the Hart House music newsletter, a division of the Hart House Music Committee.

HART HOUSE
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO